

EPISODE 8 - ORIENTING INFORMATION

Reveals how the analytic point originates in a fieldwork process.

Orienting information follows the analytic point and its purpose is to introduce the forthcoming excerpt from the ethnographic record. Potentially as short as a phrase, and usually no longer than a sentence, it may simply state, for example, that the impending excerpt comes from an interview. Alternatively, orienting information may be more artful and express interesting features and background on the field site or the informants, thereby bringing the research process to life.

Imagine you are conducting ethnographic research about the use of Starbucks as a home office. Write orienting information that introduces the excerpts, at left. The orienting information should reveal your data gathering process for the exemplar excerpt, and may be more artful. Following the examples provide in Episode 8: Orienting Information, create three versions that have low, medium, and high degrees of detail.

[Interview Transcript]

Inez, describing her time in Starbucks, said "...I always sit at the table near the plug, because I need it to charge my laptop. Without asking, this guy, probably a student, unplugged me. I was stunned and going to speak but he seemed so harried and anxious that I just turned away."

Low _____

Medium _____

High _____



Low _____

Medium _____

High _____

[Fieldnote]

Friday, 7:10 am. I came early to get a seat. Already tables are filled. I am not the only one waiting. There's no real system for queuing for open seats and people get aggressive. The Starbucks staff pays no attention to the social tensions beyond their coffee bar.

Low _____

Medium _____

High _____